

SEP 8 1966

Greensboro, Vermont
August 29, 1966

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
School of Medicine
Stanford University
Stanford, California

Dear Josh:

I'm sorry I wasn't at home when you telephoned. But we were in Austria from March to June, and then traveling, and since July 6 up here, while I try to finish a novel. I'll be glad if you'll call me after registration day, Sept. 26, and we can have a talk, a drink, a lunch, an afternoon, or an evening.

The samples of your weekly column in the Washington Post are admirable, full not only of information that the public ought to have, but of attitudes and ethical problems that the public ought to ponder. I wish more people with something like your scientific eminence were willing to talk to people that way.

I'm not quite sure what you're asking me, or intending to ask me, about the doubtful virtue of over-protecting redwoods. It is true, if one may believe the Sierra Club Bulletin and the forest products magazines, that the healthiest situation for redwoods is annual light burning. But once you've protected them and let the duff build up, you can't allow burning because it wouldn't stay light. It's a nice instance of the way science and technology paint us into corners, and virtuous conservation intentions beget odd consequences. I don't know the answer. Do you?

Give me another call in September. It will be good to talk to you.

Yours,

Wallace Stegner